

Back to Tape (4/7)

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19/01/2018 A road trip to the roots of hip-hop. Music journalist Niko Hüls took a Porsche Panamera on a trip across Germany to explore the most formative influences, disciplines and personalities of this urban youth culture. His next stop: the metropolis in the heart of Hessen, Frankfurt am Main.

Six cities, ten artists, a car and a good deal of rap: In a series of guest interviews on Porsche Newsroom, Niko Hüls, boss of the German hip-hop magazine Backspin, reports on his road trip across Germany. More impressions can be found on Instagram and Twitter using the hashtag #porschexbackspin as well as on the Backspin TV YouTube channel.

1993: The year Moses Pelham und Thomas Hofmann founded the Rödelheim Hartreim Projekt, named after the Rödelheim district of Frankfurt which was home to Pelham and his family. The two music producers formed a crew – famous for its motto "Wenn es nicht hart ist, ist es nicht das Projekt" ("If it's not hard, it's not the project") – which rediscovered artists such as Sabrina Setlur (Schwester S), Xavier Naidoo and Glashaus featuring Cassandra Steen. In 1994, the rappers brought out their debut album "Direkt aus Rödelheim" ("Straight out of Rödelheim"), which went on to achieve gold status ten years

after its release. Shortly after their first, the rappers released another two albums under the same alias: “Zurück nach Rödelheim” (“Back to Rödelheim”) in 1996 and the crew’s first live album, “Live aus Rödelheim” (“Live from Rödelheim”) in 1995.

Moses Pelham is Frankfurt

Moses Pelham represents the face of his city’s (or any city’s) hip-hop scene like no other rapper can. As a counter-movement to the music of the Fantastic Four, the son of the American blues musician Moe Pelham Sr. developed a style that was incredibly hard and completely his unique, and continues to define Germany’s rap scene today with albums such as “Geteiltes Leid” (“Shared Suffering”), “Raining Rhymes” and “Herz” (“Heart”). Moses Pelham is Frankfurt. And in November 2017 Frankfurt demonstrated that the city is Moses Pelham when it awarded the producer and owner of 3P (Pelham Power Productions) the city’s Goetheplakette (Goethe Plaque) for special cultural achievements, presented by Mayor Peter Feldmann.

.@nikobackspin meets @mosespelham in Frankfurt en route to the roots of German hip hop. Stay tuned for more. #porschexbackspin #workdrivebalance pic.twitter.com/qtktYn8nUO

Every artist I’ve met on this tour has joined me in exploring their city, visiting historical hip-hop sites, recording studios or concert halls. Moses Pelham and I visited a place of particular sentimental value: his parent’s home on the corner of Rödelheimer Landstraße and Kleemannstraße. This is the place where it all began in the 1980s; where, as a 13 year old, Moses produced his first tapes; where he came up with the opening lines of his noteworthy solo single “Twilight Zone”. It's a real “goosebumps moment” on my #workdrivebalance tour. Check out the video to see my visit in its entirety.

To the same extent that Moses Pelham and the Rödelheim Hartreim Projekt are synonymous with the history of the Frankfurt rap/street rap scene, Namika symbolises the completely new culture of the modern, accessible and colourful hip-hop scene. Her song “Lieblingsmensch” (“Favourite Person”) not only reached the number one spot in Germany’s single charts in 2015, but also won three gold and platinum awards. As an artist with rap roots, Namika has been heard by a broad pop audience, appearing in major TV productions or next to other famous faces from the hip-hop scene such as Cro and Teesy.

Frankfurt, 2nd stop – @nikobackspin meets up with German singer and rapper @namikamusik. Get to know more about the journey to the roots of German hip hop soon @allesbackspin & @porsche_newsroom! #porschexbackspin #workdrivebalance #porsche #porschenews #porschenewsroom #hiphop #hiphoptour #namika #allesbackspin #panamera #porschepanamera #porschepanameraturbo #panameraturbo #turbo #car #porschelife Panamera Turbo: Fuel consumption combined 9.4 – 9.3 l/100 km; CO2 emissions 214 – 212 g/km

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Namika, also known by the stage name Hän Violett, is my second guest during this stop on the tour. As I make my way across the city in my Panamera, from Rödelheim to Offenbach, I also experience a generational shift. Namika is a Frankfurt native with Moroccan roots. Her ancestors originate from the coastal town of Nador, the place that gave its name to Namika's first solo album released in 2015. In my opinion, Namika unifies a love of urban diversity in her music and lyrics, delivering intercultural sound styles and honest lyrics, guided by the influences of hip-hop and oriental beats. As she says herself, Namika writes her music "for people who lose themselves in the big city in order to find themselves. People who want to enjoy life, just like I do." This is evident from every second that we spend together at her creative hotspot just outside Frankfurt. And that only leaves me to say: it's a pleasure knowing you, Namika.

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